

The Prince and the People.
A Poem.

In Two Cantos.



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THE PRINCE AND THE PEOPLE.

A Poem.

IN TWO CANTOS.

BY

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PREFACE.

The first part of this poem was written during the violent and unjust, but luckily short-lived, “popular outcry” against the Prince Consort.

The illness of the Authoress prevented its being published “in the nick of time.” A small thing will turn a stream—a little matter has been known even to stem a torrent. This trifle was begun with that object, since so fully accomplished by the “plain unvarnished tale,” told in “The House,” and gladly believed by the majority of the Nation.

“The late remorse of love” welcomed the simple story, that exculpated the “Prince” while it inculpated the “People.”

This subject, which will one day be matter of History, is not unworthy the dignity of verse.

PREFACE.

The recapitulation of Prince Albert's public and private claims on the People's gratitude, and the retrospective view of the Queen's life, from her Accession up to the present moment, will, we trust, rekindle loyal devotion, and popular enthusiasm, even in those whom Error has blinded, and Party-spirit misled.

THE PRINCE AND THE PEOPLE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

What angry tumults burst upon the ear!
What coward lies are whispered far and near!
What sudden change!—what traitor-work is this?
For loyal *vivas*! Hark, the coward hiss!
The Janus glance—the nod, the shrug, the hint!
(Oh, souls of falsehood! and oh, hearts of flint!)
Your Prince defenceless as a woman stands,
While envy blackens! and while malice brands!
See! Royal martyr, see!—oh! shame! oh! sorrow!
To-day the shrine, the pillory to-morrow!...
First to thy statue do they bow the knee!
Then, burn thy Royal self in effigy!!!

* * * *

With princely calm, he smiled while millions bowed,
In acclamations loyal, long, and loud!

(They voted statues to his honour then,
And hailed him first of Princes and of men;)
With princely calm he watched the ebbing tide—
Calm when reviled, and calm when deified!
While busy tongues would lie away his fame,
His mute appeal is to his well-earned name;
His sole defence (blind fools with madness rife!)
The eloquence of his illustrious life—
Devoted from the hour he reached our coast,
To serve those best, who now revile him most!
Ah, fickle rabble! shall it be thy fate,
Like Athen's mob to ostracise the great!
As he of old to Aristides came,
Upon his shell to write the sage's name,
And being questioned whence his fierce disgust,
Replied “I weary of his name, ‘the Just.’”
So England's rabble in its altered mood,
Wearies, oh, Albert! of thy name “the Good;”
Blind to thy long probation, madly blind,
To all thy toils to benefit thy kind—
Blind to the fact, though like yon sun it shine,
That England's interests are one with thine—
That England's honour, is, must be thine own,
Her Queen thy wife!—her future King thy son!

Blind, fickle mob! blind to your own coarse laws,
That *self* with all men is the first great cause!
Ah, see ye not if *self* were Albert's rule,
(To play the traitor were to play the fool)
Victoria's Consort!—join the foreign league!
Victoria's Consort!—traitor-like, intrigue—
Intrigue against himself, his wife, his son!
What were our Prince if England were undone;
His Royal homes—would he resign them all?
Buckingham Palace, Windsor, Balmoral,
And lovely Osborne—homes where he delights
To greet his friends with hospitable rites—
Where every Muse and every Grace combines,
And Art adorns and Intellect refines.
And yet the humble Lares watch above
The royal hearts that beat with mutual love:
And playful there, as in some cottage-home,
The brave boys gambol, and the daughters bloom,
And royal cherubs on the palace floor
Sport free as urchins at a cottage door.
Would he descend from his so high estate,
Friend of the poor! Amphytrion of the great!
And from the proud prerogative “to give,”
And the first man of earth's first land to live

By base intrigue—avert triumphant war—
And live dependent on the maniac Czar!
Britons! if still one grain of sense prevail,
Laugh, laugh to scorn the madness of the tale!

* * * *

Great Prince! is all forgot? each boon of thine? }
The Crystal Palace!—Competitions shrine! }
And hast thou cast thy pearls before the swine, }
And have they turned to rend thee? All forgot—
Thy royal pity for the poor man's lot,
Thy earnest efforts to avert the doom,
That waits on Labour in its squalid home—
Thy royal aid, and thy right royal smile—
Thy ready purse—thy intellectual toil—
To every science, every art a friend—
Eager to all a helping hand to lend.
England's adopted son! in filial love
The children of her soil, how far above!
“Improvement” still thy watch-word, ever heard—
“Improve! Improve! from Man to barn-door bird!”
Sons of the soil! and “White Slaves” of the loom!
To cheer your lot or to avert your doom,
This was the thought by day, by night, the dream,
Of him who now is foul-mouthed slander's theme,

Whom party tools for basest cause abusing,
(“As ever noblest things find vilest using”)
Would blacken now, oh, blot upon the age!
The people’s friend, butt of the rabble’s rage!
He once so welcomed to our treacherous coast—
He, loved so well, each strove to love him most—
He, who from boyhood, as his motto bore,
On heart and banner still “*Excelsior!*”
(While happy in her own and Albion’s choice,
Victoria’s pride spoke in a nation’s voice!)
Up, Britons, up! avert the venomed dart,
It reaches Albert through Victoria’s heart!
The Queen you love, or feign to love so well—
(Her name an inspiration and a spell—)
She, whose right royal breast has never known
One wish that did not dignify a throne!
She, to whose hands in earliest youth was given
A power she’s used as delegate of heaven!
She, who has ne’er forgotten for one hour
To make the “Cross” the sceptre of her power!
She, who with confidence may hope to meet
The people she has loved at Jesus’ feet,
And cry like Rachael in the Courts of Heaven:—
“Behold me and the children you have given!”

She, whose young choice ye all so well approved!
Proud of your Queen, while as the wife she loved!

* * * *

Ye! who so loudly vaunt the husband's sway!
And make the wife's chief virtue to "obey!"
Would you deny the Royal Wife the power
To ask her Lord's advice in Danger's hour.
And English husbands does it so offend,
The Queen seeks counsel of the Wife's best friend?...
Full well we know all common laws are vain,
As Queen, Victoria's duty is to reign—
But as a wife she surely has the power
To seek her Lord in Danger's darkening hour!...
Hers the divided duties which demand,
Her grasping intellect, her steady hand,
Her heart of tenderness, her soul of truth,
The will of Tudor with the love of Ruth!
Then let us not with thorns and briars spread
The slippery path her firm small foot must tread —
Storms lower above that path so hard to keep!...
(Curses on Albion, if Victoria weep!)
And if the happy home that should requite,
The Queen's laborious day, and anxious night,

Is robbed of half its sweet secure repose,
By all the anguish woman's bosom knows,
When one she loves with all her woman-heart,
Is made the mark of Slander's venom'd dart.
The "Queen" may veil her sorrows from the
 throng,

But to the "Wife" what secret woes belong!
Oh, if in wantonness, or malice vile,
You quench in those blue eyes their wonted smile,
And in her secret bower the large tears fill
Those azure orbs—if she whose royal will
Controls the many, but cann't control
The deep, though hidden anguish of her soul,
If she should start to hear the rabble's voice
Raised to upbraid and villify her choice!...
Then, Britain, be it yours *again* to prove
That worst of woes "*the late remorse of Love!*"

Ye know it well, and ye must feel it long!...
It lives in History, it lives in Song!
Rabble! accurst by ages yet to come,
The iron shutters of your Hero's home!...
He too was once the victim of your wrath—
He too has heard you curse him on his path,

And when your fickle love was his once more,
And those who yelled, were foremost to adore—
And loud huzzas are blent with grateful vows,
He turns and calmly points to Apsley House—
And Janus eyes with tears bedimmed perceive,
The barriers that forbid him to believe!

* * * *

With Wellington come thoughts of Waterloo—
Blush, blush! my country for the hour that sees
Ungrateful Athens spring to life in you—
In Wellington a new Miltiades.
The hour was come, the hour that comes to all
Who tread triumphant Glory's proud career.
There was a change—a thrilling change—a fall—
That fall was thine, my country! Ye might tear
From his proud brow the wreath he won so well—
Ye have unwitting placed a nobler there—
The crown of Martyrdom! ... It mingled well
With Glory's laurel wreath—that Martyr crown.
And History's pages, as we trace them, tell,
'Twas ever worn by sons of just renown.

Oh, Wellington! I stood upon thy fields,
Thy fields, thy well won fields of Waterloo!

I saw the trophies grateful Nature yields,
Trees, valleys, golden corn-fields, spake of you!
I listened to the peasant's oft-told story—
The tale of Gallia's fall, of England's glory;
And my eye followed as he marked the spot,
Where, braving clashing steel and hostile shot,
Wellington stood! I gloried in thee then—
With patriot gratitude my bosom glowed,
But, oh, less deeply, fervently, than when
 On Fancy's ear, discordant, long, and loud
Bursts the vile hoot of the infuriate crowd!
True, ah! most true, the humblest soldier shared
With thee, the glories of that day, and bared
His bosom to the hostile shot, and stood
Resolved to buy our freedom with his blood—
And, ah! most true our grateful tears should flow
For all who fought or fell at Waterloo!
But Iron Warrior! who could share with thee
The canker of Responsibility!
England has heaped high honours upon thy name—
 It needed none, can wealth, can titles pay
Such hours as thou hast known when Briton's fame
 Depended on thy conduct of a day!...

“Wrong — wrong shall come, but woe to those
through whom

That wrong shall come!” So spake who could
not err.

Then woe to thee, my country! woe has come,
Showered by thee on England’s Saviour!

While he who showed him to the wolves of France,
When wolves of France were thirsting for his
blood;

While he was fain conceal him from the glance
Of rescued England—baited and pursued

By British bull-dogs—can this be forgiven—
Wins them Ingratitude—the smile of Heaven!

No! Retribution comes upon the wings
Of Time, a tardy but a certain stage;

And when the all-recording Clio sings,
Yes, sings the glories of the present age,

Triumphs abroad in Arms, in Arts at home!

A weeping Nation at her Hero’s tomb!

Our noble Armies and our matchless Fleet—
(The Queen and people at the Saviour’s feet—)

How like a blot ingratitude appears—

Thy treach’rous tale upon the page of Glory!

England, look through the vista of long years—
Hearken, my country ! hear ye not the story,
Chorussed by curses ! ... yes, each future age,
Shall breathe a curse upon these times and you,
When they shall read the wrongs upon your page,
Of Albert, and of him of Waterloo!...

THE PRINCE AND THE PEOPLE.

CANTO THE SECOND.

'Tis done—'tis done! Now dies away the blast,
And Reason's still, small voice is heard at last!...
The Majesty of Truth must aye prevail,
Repentant millions hear the simple tale!...
Atonement calls aloud on Albert's name!
There Malice skulks—here blushes honest Shame!
The love of millions (penitent, betrayed),
Great Queen! for Albert at thy feet is laid!
And thou wilt pardon, for 'tis ever thine
To frame thy conduct by the will Divine!

* * * *

Come, then, ye Sons of England! come! and cast
Your tearful glances on the lovely Past!...
England! the Muse invites! in Memory's glass,
Behold the scenes that were! Behold, where pass
The pageants, and behold the homage shown
To England's Virgin Queen!—Rose of the Throne!—

And as ye watch her, from the earliest hour,
When those fair hands first grasped the reins of power,
Your shame, your deep contrition soon shall prove
How well ye feel “the late remorse of Love!”

THE ACCESSION.

A mighty Queen! but now! a mourning maiden!
Who loved to shed her filial tears unseen—
She sank to sleep, her heart with sorrow laden!
And woke a proud, but weeping nation’s Queen!

Weeping! but, oh! the tears in Albion flowing,
For him “the Sailor King,” the Good! the True!
Those tears, Young Queen! in Mem’ry’s sunset
glowing,
Form a bright rainbow of best hopes for you!

Those tears, they prove how warm in their devotion
The hearts that now have pledged their faith
to thee!
Queen of the Isles! and Empress of the Ocean!
And—prouder title still—“Queen of the Free!”

As rally round thine isles the deep blue waters,
Whose crested waves, like proudest warriors bow,
So, England's bravest sons, and fairest daughters,
Round thy firm throne, Victoria! rally now!

Victoria! name, how proud! and how auspicious!
Linked with bright Hope! and glorious Memory!
Star of the Isles! thy dawn, if so propitious,
Ah! what may not thy fuller radiance be!

Thine are all gifts that, in a humbler station,
In many a heart thine image had enshrined!
Beauty! dear boast! of Valour's chosen nation!
And all rich treasures of the heart and mind!

The mighty Dead to thee have been unfolding
Wisdom that strengthens, Piety that cheers!
Then marvel not, Old England! in beholding,
On Youth's fair brow, the thoughtfulness of years!

And British hearts, with loyal rapture swelling,
A new Elizabeth have hailed in thee!
Elizabeth! but with a young heart welling
With every chaste and holy sympathy!

For o'er the "Titan Tudor's" dauntless spirit,
No pious Mother watched with heaven-taught
care;
While thine!—her royal virtues shall inherit,
Of every heart that beats for thee—a share.

Oh! Royal Guardian of a Nation's treasure!
What hours of watchfulness and care were thine!
What fears disturbed a Mother's prideful pleasure!
What British heart refuses thee a shrine!

And now thy work is done! and bravely done!
The Virgin Queen ascends her Fathers' throne,
In grace, in duty strong!—the goal is won—
And, under Heaven, the praise, is Thine alone!

God save the Queen! God save the Queen! thine
ear,
Catches on every side—God save the Queen!
Oh, what a sound for Mother's heart to hear!
Amen! that heart replies, "God save the Queen!"

* * *

A year has glided by—that year has proved
Thou wert, the longer known, the better loved!

Poets and heros now contend to prove
The Queen of England, is the Queen of Love !
And Chivalry's wild homage now is paid,
Less to the thronèd Queen, than peerless maid !
Oh ! were the secrets of all bosoms known,
Bright "Gloriana of the diamond throne!"
What wild idolatries with reason war ?
What hapless moths are sighing for the Star!...
That Star, so proudly, so serenely bright—
So all unconscious of its own sweet light !
The age of chivalry is here once more !
Beauty is on the throne—and Men adore !
Adore in silence—sighing but to prove
By death the deep devotion of their love !

THE CORONATION.

All England is astir—impatient now
To see her ancient crown on that young brow !
Thy Hall, thy Abbey, Westminster, behold !
All that is great by birth, or great by gold !

One thought thrills through the crowd assembled
there—

How calm! how Queenly! yet, how young! how
fair!

With steady step the noble path she trod—

Why should she fear? Her trust is in her God!

Pale, but composed—her calm response is given—

Divine her right! appointed one of Heaven!

Now, at the Primate's feet, Victoria bends,

While to her breast th' anointing oil descends,

Now on her head—so rich in heavenly grace,

The Crown of England it is his to place!

And now in earnest prayer her form is seen!...

She knelt a suppliant, and she rose a Queen!

Beauty was there—bright looks and laughing eyes,

And cheeks and lips rich in their roseate dyes,

And waving plumes—and robes of dazzling hue—

And eyes of glancing jet, or melting blue—

But pale, Victoria stood, with banded hair,

(Fair, almost as a marble statue, fair;)

With large blue eyes, rich in ethereal light,

And look in which the heart and soul unite—

A form so girlish, yet with Queenly grace,

Majesty written on her classic face,

Unlike in everything to all the fair,
The plumed, the rouged, the jewelled triflers
there!

Her breast anointed! and her young brow crowned!
She cast one Queen-like, lustrous glance around;
And majesty and grace were in her mien—
She smiles—that royal smile befits a Queen!
And the deep rapture in those walls comprest,
Burst loud from North to South, from East to West—
And shouts, and *vivas*, and huzzas between,
Rose from a Nation's heart, “Long live the
Queen!”

* * * *

The Virgin Queen! how beautiful! how lone!
Like Cynthia's self, she smiles from England's
throne!

How lovely! and how isolated now!
Weighs not the crown upon so young a brow?
With Queenly state, all girlish fancies jar,
And yet a girl's young heart beats 'neath yon
Star!

A maiden's heart—and maiden's heart must prove,
As Queen or Cottager—the power of Love!

Presumptuous Princes throng her fairy Court,
Their baseless hopes are “Gloriana’s” sport;
But if, the frolic girl behind the scene,
Before her suitors, she is all the Queen—
Proud, yet composed—severe, and yet serene!
With those bold wooers haughty is her air,
They find Victoria resolute as fair!
They marvel much—compare her to Queen Bess—
Doom her young heart to single blessedness!
Convinced that, could she know the “pleasing
 pain,”
Such charms as *their*’s her favour *must obtain*!
But for their comfort and their pride they know,
That heart of ice aye dwelt in breast of snow!

Yes; the “Fair Virgin throned by the West,”
As yet defies the tyrant of the breast;
But, ah! ere long, proud Sovereign of the Isles,
Young Albert sighs—and fair Victoria smiles!
The tell-tale flowers her royal hand confers—
Her heart is Albert’s, and his soul is hers!

THE ROYAL NUPTIALS.

Britons! the Nuptial festival prepare!
And twine the orange wreath for Beauty's brow!
A Royal wedding!—and yet *love* is there,
Warm as when village lovers breathe the vow!

And never happiness has sent its flush
To cheek of village girl (the hamlet's pride)
With a more roseate and more heavenly blush,
Than decks the cheek of Albert's royal bride!

Love in her eyes—and in her virgin heart,
Woman's deep reverence for man's mental sway;
The Queen is loyal now—she knows her part
As wife, to love, to honour, and obey!

And never have those holy words been spoken
By lowliest lips, in such a thrilling tone!...
As if the Queen, would make those words a token,
That all her Woman-heart is his, alone!

The bridal veil her graceful form adorning,
The roseate blushes and the April tears,
The loving heart all coy disguises scorning,
The noble trust, that smiles at coward fears!

The stately beauty of the princely lover,
Pale with emotion, and devoted love,
The tearful eyes that meet, when hearts brim over,
And joined on Earth, would yet be joined Above!

The earnest Love that brought those hearts together,
The Nation's deep devotion to its Queen!...
All these made each spectator question whether
Such royal nuptials eye had ever seen!

Many were beautiful, and brave, and gay,
But all unmarked their charms, on *them* alone,
The Bride and Bridegroom of that Heaven-blest day,
All eyes were fixed, and all God's sunshine shone!

And they are gone—yes, gone as Man and Wife,
Gone on that journey, whose goal is the grave,
Their's all the rapture of Love's wedded life!
God save Victoria! ... and her Albert, save!

No longer lone and isolated now,
The crown sits lightly on Victoria's brow,
And happiness has left its radiant trace
In those blue eyes, and on that youthful face.
No *lonely* state her Queenly joys shall mar!...
The young wife's heart, now dances 'neath the
star,

And every joy she doubles, as she shares,
And scarcely feels the burthen of her cares—
Congenial tastes, congenial hopes are theirs. }
A princely form is ever at her side,
A princely heart is ever there to guide—
A manly spirit, and a temper bland!...
A polished mind, an all-accomplished hand,
One whose best int'rests with her own are blent,
(In mercy to her lonely grandeur sent),
To lend to castle-hall and palace dome,
The sweetest, holiest charm, of cottage home—
And all the arts by Albert loved, combine
To occupy, to solace, to refine.
And soon a richer treasure still is sent,
A daughter smiles—and Albert were content!...
But that the Nation wearies, till it hails
Old England's future King—a Prince of Wales!

And ere their second wedded year is gone,
The royal parents smile upon a Son!...
The People's happiness is now complete,
“The Prince of Wales!” they shout, from street to
street,
A Prince! a Prince is born! they ask no more—
“A Prince! a Prince!” resounds from shore to
shore!
And royal buds—not “few, or far between,”
Gladden the home of England's Heaven-blest Queen!
That home of Love and Virtue soon becomes
A bright pure model, for all British homes!
Lovely Religion lends her heavenly light,
Duty, her handmaid—Happiness, her right,
No Idlesse there—ye listless Fair, behold!
A Queen, whose hours are by their duties told!...
While ye, lie languid, lulled by Slumber's god,
The Queen has “met the morning face to face,”
On Albert's arm, the Park, the Slope, has trod,
Breathing that air that seems the soul to brace!
And Industry and calculating Care,
Order, and Diligence, and Self-control,
And Discipline unknown to humbler Fair,
Make of her life, one great harmonious whole.

A model Mother, and a model Wife,
 Unrivalled in the Queenly art—to reign!
The love and fear of God! they guide her life,
 And the Victorian annals know no stain.
Where'er it is her royal will to roam,
 To cheer her Emerald Island, or to see,
With all a loving wife's delight, the home
 Of Albert's youth, and happy infancy!...
At home, abroad, the Queen is still the same,
 Right royal Lady! bearing still in mind
Whence comes her power—and prouder of the name
 Of Christian! than of "Queen of all her kind."
Nor unrecorded upon History's page,
 That noble answer of a soul how bright!
"Tell me not," said Victoria to the sage,
 "That 'tis expedient—tell me, is it right?"

* * * *

And now her Albert, eager to improve,
 To cheer, to bless the people of her love,
Invites the Nations, who obey his call,
 To meet Great Industry in Crystal Hall!...
So proud a meeting as the East ne'er saw,
 Such Argosies from every empire came!...
And congregated nations felt with awe,
 The might, the magic power of Albert's name!

All that was deftly small, or proudly grand,
Costly in detail, or conception vast,
All that could tax the Mind, the Head, the Hand,
Was gathered there—and Nations gazed, aghast!
And there, our graceful Queen who loves so well,
Whate'er bespeaks the mighty power of Mind,
Welcomed the Nations (every smile a spell)
And round her thronged the magnates of our kind!
And many a genius long unknown to fame,
As the oft-sighed for praise and guerdon came,
Learned from that day to bless great Albert's name! }
Yes, from that Crystal Palace was unfurled,
A spell that still is working through the world,
And chastened Taste, and sweet Refinement finds
Its way to countless homes, and countless minds!

* * * *

Alas! when next the Prince the People meets,
When next the millions throng old London's streets,
The sable scarves are fluttering in the air!...
A deep, a national regret is there!
To the stern soldier's eye hot tear-drops come!
They bear their Hero to his last long home—
Slowly and heavily each footstep falls,
Wellington sleeps by Nelson in St. Paul's!...

But, full of years and honours, there was laid—
Peace to his ashes! honour to his shade!
Victoria weeps—such early ties are riven!
Weep not, great Queen! he'll wake, and wake in
heaven!...

* * * *

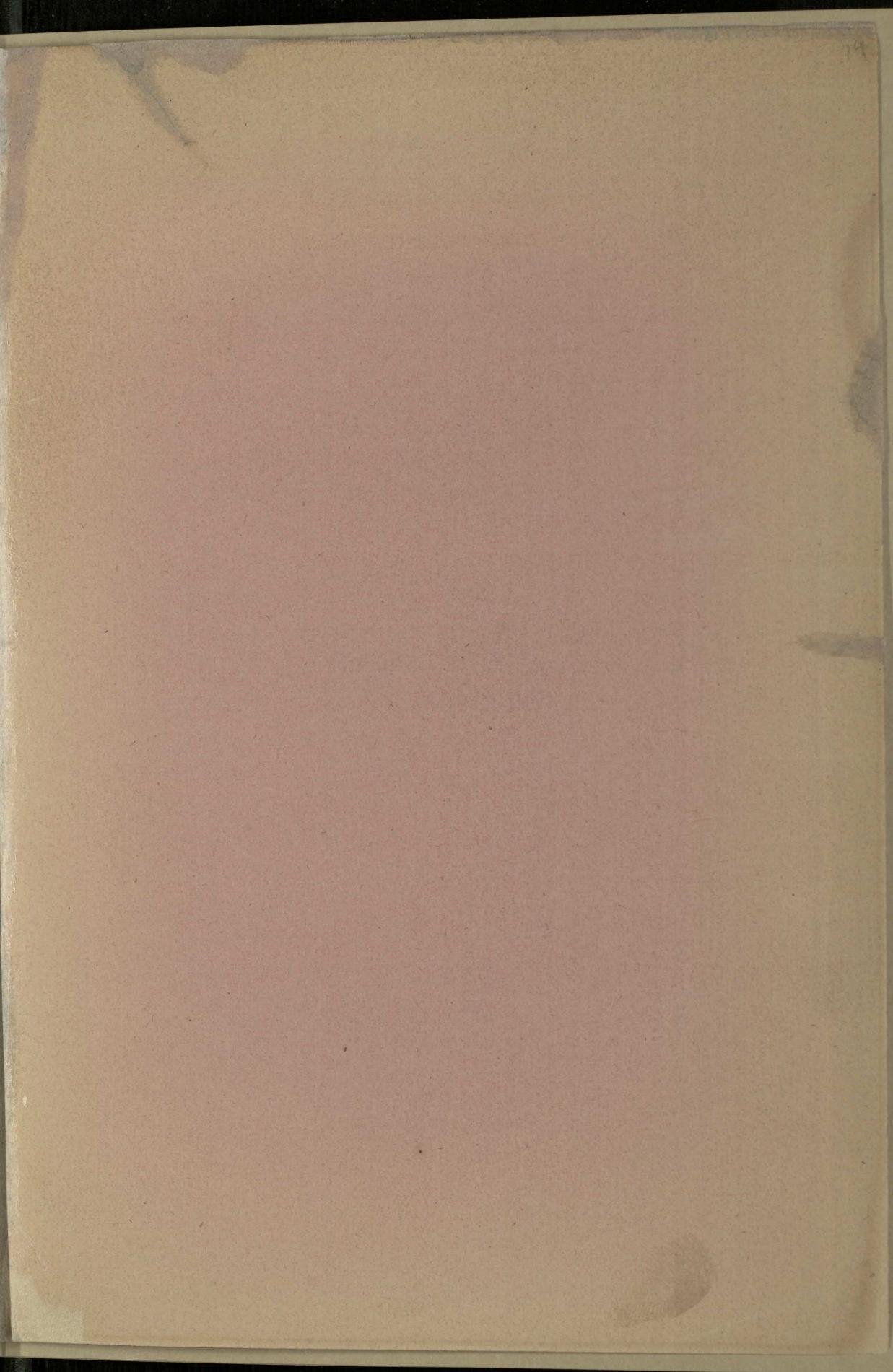
And now, the Muse withdraws the magic glass,
No more on what *has been*, the mind employ—
The Past, the Present, meet and merge—alas!
The darkening clouds obscure the Sun of Joy—
The Northern Condor fain would whet his beak,
Aggressive hordes of wild barbarians come,
And England marks the tokens that bespeak
For Turkey, violated Poland's doom!
Long, long, Diplomacy all vainly tried,
To check Aggression in its dawning hour,
The pen has failed—the barbarous Chief denied
All but the Right of Might, and every Power
That loves great Justice now prepares for war,
War, forced on Europe by the frenzied Czar!...
France long our foe, now joins her force to ours—
And Heaven shall smile on those united powers—
To arms! to arms! indignant Albion cries!
“To arms!” the new Elizabeth replies!

Her gentle hand is on the Lion's mane—
She leads—but never led him by a *chain*!...
Now at her signal, bursts he from his lair,
Burning to grapple with the Northern Bear!...
Our fleet unrivalled, sweeps the distant seas,
The Union Jack floats in the Baltic breeze,
The British sailor pants to meet the foe
And high in hope, our dauntless soldiers go!
Of England's noblest, bravest, best, the flower,
Hasten to check grim Russia's lawless power.
No British soldier dreads to meet his doom,
But, oh the wife! the babes! he leaves at home!
Home? no! their home is desolated now!...
To wolf-eyed Want, their honest pride must bow—
And while the soldier bleeds for Britain's fame,
His wife! his child! must bear a pauper's name!
Ah no! it cannot, may not, shall not be!
Soldier! thy wife, thy children shall be free!
They shall not be immured in Unions, where
Sloth herds with Crime, and Sorrow with Despair—
Thy wife would work—and work shall yet be found—
Weep not—in England hearts of ruth abound!
Throughout the Isles shall sympathy awake
And shield thy dear ones—Soldier! for thy sake!

And now to Heaven we raise the fervent prayer,
That God our Armies and our Fleets will spare—
He, who the issues of both Life and Death
Holds in his hands. Yea, he, who with a breath
Scatters Armadas—may it be his will,
That England's flag shall float triumphant still!
May dove eyed Peace, be born of righteous War!
And with his barbarous hordes, the frantic Czar
In all his base agressive schemes be “let,”
And taught a lesson he shall ne'er forget!...
May God defend the Right! and conq'ring hosts
Return in triumph to Old Albion's coasts!
While Victory hand in hand with Mercy seen,
Bears Russia's conquered flag, to England's Queen!

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